

# Combination Play

## The Wall Pass

The wall pass is a two player combination play and one of most effective ways to penetrate organized defenses. What makes it so effective, is the quickness of the movement. It does not allow the opposition time to get re-organized, especially in small spaces.

Every coach would love to have players with the ability to beat an opponent to automatically create numbers up. Unfortunately these type of players are rare, and teams alternatively have to rely on passing combinations like the wall pass in order to :

### When to use it

Although this combination play can be used in any part of the field, generally is most effective when in middle or attacking third of the field.

The wall pass can be used to achieve the following objectives:

- To deliver a shot on goal (combination between the strikers centrally at the top of the box.
- To advance the ball ( between a midfielder and



**Fig 1** Wall pass combination between a wide player 11 and a centre midfielder 8.



**Fig 2** Wall pass combination between a wide player 11 and central striker 9.



**Fig 3** Wall pass combination between of 2 strikers (10 and 9) in central areas for a shot on goal



**Fig 4** Wall pass combination between centre midfielder 8 and central striker 9

- create numeric superiority
- advance the ball
- get in dangerous space for a shot on goal
- keep possession

It almost a must for a quality midfielders or strikers to recognize the wall pass situation on the field and being able and being able to use it when required.

- a striker) in the attacking third, centrally.
- To penetrate in wide areas for a cross (between an outside midfielder and a striker).

In order for this combination to succeed, it is important that there is a synchronized common thinking between the ball carrier and the supporting player. Sometimes young players do not recog-

nize this two player combination play, and they prefer to engage in individual efforts that most usually end with loss of possession .

**The execution**

For the wall pass to be successful, both the ball carrier and the supporting player must be aware of the following key factors:

**Ball Carrier**

- Recognize that the situation is on
- Be able to commit the direct defender
- Take into account the movement of the supporting player
- Provide a quality pass to the supporting player
- Accelerate to receive the ball in the space behind the defender

If the situation would warrant a wall pass, ball carrier would approach the direct defender at the right distance, not too close (to be intercepted,) and not too far (element of surprise) and then decide to pass the ball to an oncoming supporting teammate.

Which passing technique is the most appropriate? Playing the ball with the outside part of the foot closest to the supporting player is the most effective technique when the distance of the two players (passer and receiver is close).

For greater distance and accuracy, the inside part of the foot furthest away from the supporting player would be used.

After the pass the player must accelerate to the space and direction most appropriate to receive the ball.

**Supporting Player**

In regards to the role of the supporting player, the main key factors are:

- Creation of space for himself by losing his marker by a counter movement of checking out then in (check-off movement.)
- Timing of the approach to the player with the ball.
- Angle of support
- Quality of the pass, back to the running path of the passing player.

The wall pass is the maximum expression of communication and cooperation between two players in team play. Coaches should introduce this combination play as part of their passing and receiving training program.

**Table 1** explains the didactical path for the teaching the wall pass and in particular the timing factor of this skill.

**Table 2** lists all some of key the component of these skill, and a full session to train it in

**Table 3**, is an observation card I have designed to be used by the coach to see how a particular player or players rate in the execution of the skill.

<b>Wall Pass Training Session (Table 2)</b>
<p><b><u>Age group:</u></b> U12-14</p> <p><b><u>General Objective:</u></b> Understanding and executing of a small group skill</p> <p><b><u>Specific Objective:</u></b> Execution of a wall pass</p> <p><b><u>Secondary Objective:</u></b> Understand when to pass and receive the ball.</p> <p><b><u>Equipment:</u></b> Cones, bibs, balls.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>SESSION PLAN</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Warm-up</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Game 4v4+4 Possession game</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Exercises:</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">1)Wall pass combo 1 2) Wall Pass Combo 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Game Situation</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">1) 2v2 + 2 possession game</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Final Game:</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">4v4+4</p> <p><b>Methodology</b>– Inductive/Deductive <b>Progress Feedback:</b> Observation of the theme game</p>

## WALL PASS

**Table 1: Didactical Path**

Who	How	Where	When	Why
<u>Players</u>	<u>Modality</u>	<u>Space</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Goal</u>
<p>Everyone in particular midfielders and attackers</p>	<p><b><u>Part of the foot surface used for the pass:</u></b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><u>For the player with the ball:</u></p> <p>1) Inside foot when supporting player is far. 2) Outside foot when supporting player is close.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><u>For the supporting player:</u></p> <p>The most convenient in relation to the angle of the body</p> <p><b><u>Movement of the players:</u></b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><u>Player with the Ball:</u> Pass and sprint behind the defender (change of pace and direction).</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><u>Supporting player:</u> Check-off and movement towards player with the ball. (Angle)</p>	<p><b><u>Attacking 3rd centrally:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wall pass between strikers</li> <li>• Wall pass between midfielders and strikers</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Attacking 3rd flanks:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Between outside midfielders and strikers</li> <li>• Inside midfielders and outside midfielders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Player with the ball is pressed.</li> <li>• Player with the ball can pass the ball</li> <li>• There is visual communication between player with the ball and supporting player</li> <li>• There is space behind the defender</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To beat an opponent.</li> <li>• To exploit space in order to...</li> </ul> <p>A) Establish numeric superiority</p> <p>B) to receive the ball past an opponent</p>

### OBSERVATION CARD

FOR THE PLAYER WITH THE BALL	Always	Some	Never
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commits the opponent holding his head up</li> <li>• Evaluate the information regarding the position of the "supporting wall"</li> <li>• Communicate with the support player</li> <li>• Puts the wall player in a position of support</li> <li>• Knows where the dangerous space behind the defender is</li> <li>• Passes the ball with the most effective part of the foot</li> <li>• Times his pass correctly</li> <li>• Makes the pass at the right distance from the defender.</li> </ul>			
FOR THE SUPPORTING PLAYER			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes the situations for a wall pass</li> <li>• Knows when to check off to loose his marker</li> <li>• Takes the right angle to support</li> <li>• Times his run towards the player with the ball</li> <li>• Evaluates the right distance of support</li> <li>• Receives the ball correctly</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Table 3:</b> Technical /tactical abilities of the players involved in the wall</p>			